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# NOTES ON INDIA

*Successes*

*Peculiarities*

*Incidents*

By

**JAMES L. BARTON**

ENVELOPE SERIES

Vol. V., No. 2

A QUARTERLY

July, 1902

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Entered at the Post Office, Boston, Mass., as second-class matter



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# NOTES ON INDIA

BY

JAMES L. BARTON  
*Secretary*

*And Member of the Recent Deputation  
to India*

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American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

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## PREFACE.

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We are glad to present in this number of the Envelope Series the "Notes on India," prepared by Secretary James L. Barton, who, as a member of the deputation sent out by the Board, has recently visited the missions in India and Ceylon. These Notes give glimpses of the field in which our missions are located, some of the successes achieved and some of the peculiarities and difficulties of the work in that land.

It would give the greatest satisfaction if there could be many orders for this leaflet, whether by the pastors, or missionary committees, or the leaders of Endeavor Societies.

We also invite those who receive this issue of the Envelope Series to become paying subscribers to the series by inclosing *ten cents* to Mr. Charles E. Swett, 14 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

## NOTES ON INDIA.

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India is a land of mystery and marvel. It covers an area one half that of the United States. Its population is four times that of our own country, two and a half times that of the old Roman Empire in its highest glory, and nearly one-fifth that of the entire world. More nations are found there than on the continent of Europe, and they speak at least seventy languages and dialects.

### INDIA HAS HAD A WONDERFUL HISTORY.

“When, thirty centuries ago, our ancestors were groveling in the lowest stages of primitive savagery, our fellow Aryans of India were rejoicing in a civilization of their own, which was, in its way, unique and distinguished. Their language, ever strong, pliant, expressive, was the worthy vehicle of noble thought and religious aspiration. Their philosophy has perhaps indicated the highest reach of self-propelled human reason and metaphysical ingenuity which the world has ever known. Their religion is the most remarkable ethnic faith ever constructed by sin-laden man,—the most remarkable in the multiplicity of its gods, in the elaboration of its ritual, in the tyranny of its compact social organism, and in its power of resistance. No

other land can boast of so voluminous a religious literature. Around much the longest epic ever written by man gather numberless tomes of song and prayer, of ceremony and law, of myth and legend, of high sentiment and debasing superstition. All is regarded as equally inspired, and often the worst is held in highest esteem."

## A WONDERFUL CONFLICT IS IN PROGRESS.

"Christianity, the mightiest of missionary religions, is engaged in a struggle with the greatest of ethnic faiths. Never before did our faith meet so doughty and subtle a foe. Neither Roman law and rule nor Greek philosophy and ideals were comparable to the mighty powers which Hinduism is putting forth to-day in order to arrest the progress of Christianity in that land and to rob it of its success. It brings to the defense a morally hypnotic, stupefying philosophy, a bewildering pantheon, an all-embracing ceremonial, a crushing social tyranny and a defiant, unscrupulous hierarchy. All these add heat and passion to the struggle, and will defer the final issue; but they cannot discourage the Christian worker in that land, nor blind him to the fact that already the people are gradually transferring their allegiance from Krishna to Christ. For centuries Christianity has conducted this war in that country. But it is only during the last century that it has wisely met this foe and has wrenched from it some of the grandest trophies of the ages. The day of solid progress and permanent success has dawned

upon our work, prophetic of the ultimate triumph which is to crown the efforts of God's church in that great country. The two thousand missionaries and the twenty thousand native Christian workers represent a mighty force, which, under God, will produce a grand revolution among that ancient people. This revolution is now going on. The million Christians in our Protestant mission churches are rapidly growing not only numerically, but also in intelligent religious zeal and power, and in social position and influence. The three hundred thousand scholars in our mission schools, studying God's Word and learning the spirit of our faith, give but a small suggestion of the all-pervasive leavening influence of our teaching and life in that land. The present ferment and change and unrest now witnessed in Hinduism itself is encouraging evidence of the trend of battle."—*Dr. Jones.*

### CEYLON AND INDIA.

While the island of Ceylon is separate from India as far as the administration of its government is concerned, its mission work is closely affiliated with that of India. Our work there is confined to the Tamil people of the Jaffna Peninsula, who emigrated from India long ago, and whose language is the same as that of the Tamils of Southern India, among whom our Madura Mission is at work.

The Marathi Mission in India and the Ceylon Mission are the two oldest missions of our Board, the former having been begun in 1813, and the latter in 1816. Missiona-



ries from Ceylon went over to India and began the Madura Mission in 1834. While Jaffna is not far removed from India, it is not an easy matter to journey from one to the other, as the ordinary line of travel does not pass that way. A new railroad from Madura to the sea at a point in communication with Jaffna by a regular boat service will bring the two missions much nearer together.

The American Board has at work in these three missions, 86 missionaries, of whom 30 are ordained men. These dwell in 25 different places, and are carrying on work through the aid of native workers in 513 different places. There are 105 organized churches connected with our missions, having a membership of nearly 12,000. There are 1,539 trained men and women who are Christian pastors, preachers, evangelists, catechists, Bible readers and teachers, working with our missionaries. The churches last year received on confession over fifteen hundred new members, and the people gave, for the support of their own religious and educational institutions and for the extension of the gospel, over nineteen thousand dollars. When we remember that the country is desperately poor, and that during the famine of the last three years many Christians have been compelled to resort to the relief works to keep from starving, and when we bear in mind that in that country a day's wage averages from six to fifteen cents, the laborer supplying his own food, it becomes clear that these gifts cost much sacrifice.

These three missions are conducting a Christian educational work ranging from the



most primitive village school under a tree, to Jaffna and Pasumalai Colleges, and Ahmednagar and Pasumalai Theological Seminaries. Over twenty-eight thousand pupils and students are studying in these various institutions, in preparation, many of them, for a life of service for their own people. These few statistics give but a faint impression of the amount of work carried on by our missionaries in these three important missions of our Board.

### “CAT AND MONKEY THEOLOGY.”

There are two distinct kinds of religious teachings among the non-Christians in India; one is called the “cat principle” and the other the “monkey principle.” The first is represented by the Mohammedans, who believe that all men are in the hands of a God who determines their destiny whatever they themselves may do; the second, by some classes, if not most of the Hindus, who teach that the destiny of each individual depends upon his own acts. The names which characterize the two schools of thought are taken from the fact that when a cat wishes to transfer her kitten to another place she catches it by the nape of his neck and, with no coöperation from the kitten, and without conference or consultation, takes him along.

With the monkey it is different. When the mother wishes to carry her young, she leaps over it and the baby monkey clings with its four feet to the breast of the mother, or it leaps upon the mother’s back, and is thus transported. The mother pre-

sents herself, but the weaker one must put trust in the parent and cling for dear life while being carried to a place of safety.

The missionary teaching is in the line of the monkey theology, God coöperating with men for their own redemption.

## THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

The Sunday-school has a large place in the work of our missionaries in India and Ceylon. Nearly all of the day schools have a regular Sunday session, which is regarded by the pupils as of equal importance with the other days of the week. While the Bible and singing are taught in some form each day of the week, the Sunday-school is given up entirely to sacred things. Many a Sunday-school is composed of Hindu pupils entirely, but they make no objections to Sunday attendance or to the Sunday studies.

Passages of Scripture are committed to memory and Christian lyrics and hymns are taught the children, many of whom take great pleasure in the musical part of the program. These countries have one advantage in this work which we do not have in the United States, — children learn there aloud. They study aloud and, when they say anything over to themselves, they talk it right out. Therefore, when a Sunday-school scholar is taught a passage of Scripture and enjoined not to forget it, he will say it over to himself aloud whenever the impulse strikes him during the week. In this way he is teaching his parents and his play-mates the same lessons he is learning himself.

Some of the churches carry on mission Sunday-schools in which the members of the church take an active part, like the Navaly Church in Manepay, Ceylon. The deputation saw Sunday-schools in churches, in schoolhouses, in leper asylums, under trees, in orphan asylums, in hospitals, among blind children, and, in fact, in about every place where Christian work could be carried on ; and everywhere they had but one aim, and that was, to so bring to bear upon the lives of the attendants the single truth of the gospel of Christ that they should be touched with his Spirit and transformed into his disciples.

In our own missions in these countries there are over twenty-one thousand pupils in the Sunday-schools. Hundreds of these schools are conducted without the presence of a missionary, being in full charge of a native pastor or teacher, or an earnest Christian brother. In but few cases is the superintendent a missionary. A gift of fifteen dollars to the American Board will support a Sunday-school in one of these countries for a year.

## CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR.

The Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor has a strong hold in these countries. The societies in the various boarding schools are active in Christian work among their fellow-pupils, and in many other ways. When the recent deputation of the American Board arrived at Madura, they found it the center of a strong and aggressive work among the young people. During the first Sunday

in the city, the guests in the afternoon were upon the veranda of Mr. Chandler's house watching the more than one hundred and fifty girls of the boarding-school returning from the service in the church. It was noticed that they were followed by a crowd of some seventy-five rough street boys, not in good order, but pressing along as if they felt they had a right to. It was learned that these girls, representing the Endeavor Society, had organized a Sunday-school in their schoolroom for the weaver boys, for whom no Christian work was carried on in the city. These boys were collected about the door of the church as the girls came out, and were persuaded to come over to the school. This Sunday-school had grown to about ninety. The school was visited. Everything was in the hands of the native pupils in the school. Each boy was taught to repeat a verse of Scripture and to sing Christian lyrics or hymns.

Christian Endeavor Societies are formed in schools where there are no Christians, but where all the children are Hindus. In America, "Christian Endeavor Society" means the society of those who are trying to live the Christian life. Among those Hindu Christian Endeavor Societies in India, it means "A Society of Hindus, who are trying to learn about the Christian life." Their pledge is, — "Trusting in the Lord to help me, I promise to attend the meetings of the Society regularly ; to make a careful study of the Bible ; to seek, and, so far as I understand it, to follow the truth. I also promise to lead a clean, pure life, and to help others all I can."

The deputation also found in Northern India large Christian Endeavor Societies which were doing their best to preach Jesus Christ to their associates. At Sirur they had a meeting-place upon a high hill back of the missionary's residence, where they met in pleasant weather, just before sundown. The deputation met about ninety boys upon their sacred "round top." They had brought the blind boys along, too, each sightless member having assigned to his help a boy with a good pair of eyes. The meeting-place of those boys upon the mountain faced eastward, so that the boys were looking toward where the sun was again to come in its glory and flood the land with light. They were always facing the east and the place of sunrise when they met for prayer and song. This is prophetic of the Young People's Movement in all India to-day. It is looking toward the sunrise, it is praying and watching for the coming of the Sun of Righteousness and the dawning of a new day for that dark land of superstition.

### "THE NAME."

It is the custom among the Hindus to perform an act of worship each morning before they partake of food, and the last part of the ceremony is to have painted upon the forehead, with a mixture made with the sacred ashes, a sign of a deity worshiped. This mark is of different form according to the different deities, and it is worn all day, great care being taken not to mar or efface it. It is called "Namam," or "The name." It represents the name of the god to whom

prayer was offered as the day began. All day long, wherever the person goes, every one he meets knows at a glance what act of worship was performed in the morning and to which deity that worship was directed.

We are working in India that, "His name may be upon their foreheads."

## WORK FOR WOMEN.

Christianity has brought to the women of India a ray of hope and cheer. Hinduism has many proverbs which reveal the thoughts of the Hindus regarding women. A few of these are :—

"What is the chief gate of hell? Woman."

"What is cruel? The heart of a viper."

"What is more cruel? The heart of a woman."

"What is most cruel of all? The heart of a soulless, penniless widow."

"He is a fool who considers his wife as his friend."

"Educating a woman is like putting a knife into the hands of a monkey."

A Hindu was discussing with a missionary the question of the possibility of educating girls. Pointing to a horse that stood near by he asked, "Can you teach that horse to read?" "Certainly not," replied the missionary. "Then," said the Hindu, "since you confess yourself unable to teach so intelligent an animal as a horse how to read, whence obtained you the boldness to declare that you can educate a girl?"

In spite of this tremendous prejudice against the education of women, and in the face of the general belief that they are not



worthy of education or even capable of it, we have in our mission schools over eight thousand girls, some of whom are in higher courses of study. In cases not a few, the deputation upon its recent visit to these missions was welcomed by public addresses, prepared and delivered by Indian women, which would have been a credit both in matter and delivery to any educated woman in England or in the United States. Of the nearly twenty-three thousand women who can read and write in the Madras Presidency, about twenty thousand are Christian women. At nearly every one of our twenty-five mission stations in these countries, we have boarding schools for girls where all who attend catch more or less of a conception of the possibilities that lie open to the educated Christian woman of the Orient.

### SELF-SUPPORT.

While the Christians in India are desperately poor, they are doing all they can to support their own Christian work, and even to carry the gospel to those outside. It is the purpose of the American Board and its missionaries to so establish the work that there will not always be the necessity of sending money from this country for its support. The number of Christians is not yet large enough, nor are they financially able to support all their churches and schools, to say nothing of the work of evangelists, catechists and teachers who are working for communities which are ready to listen but who have not yet become Christians.

The eighteen organized churches in Ceylon

have reached a degree of strength that enables them to dispense with an appropriation from the Board, and at the same time they are carrying on a home mission enterprise upon some neighboring islands and also a foreign missionary work upon the coast of India. In Southern India no pastor in any of the thirty-eight churches draws his support from the American Board. All of the churches contribute to a common fund, from which all of the pastors are paid. The city of Madura has four churches, while there is another at Pasumalai, about three miles away. All of these have their Indian pastors, conduct their own affairs, and are strong forces for righteousness in the community.

In the church collections, gifts in kind are presented. Many of the people are so poor that to give money would be impossible. It is an interesting sight to see a collection taken, consisting of a few copper coins, but for the most part made up of homemade palm-leaf fans, bead work, plantains, eggs, limes, mangoes, handfuls of brown rice, small packages of coarse millet and chickens. Such a collection in every case means real sacrifice, and in many an instance it means less food for the donor where he did not have enough before.

In the Marathi Mission the people are struggling to support all of their churches at an early day. Plague and famine during the last five years have prevented rapid progress in this direction. The church at Bombay is a beehive of activity, with its able pastor, its active Endeavor Society, its Sunday-school and street-preaching band of young men, besides other commendable activities. The church building, while seating some five hun-

dred people, is not sufficient to accommodate at one time the entire congregation. A special service is held in one orphanage for the three hundred and twenty-five boys, for there is no place for them in the church. The church is located upon a crowded but unusually wide thoroughfare. At the close of the afternoon service, as soon as the congregation has passed out, a company of young men begin a service upon the steps of the church, where a crowd of one hundred and more are quickly gathered. These represent a great variety of nationalities and religions. One Sunday when the deputation was present, one of the speakers took the text of his remarks from one of the Hindu sacred books, "Without a *guru* there is no salvation. Come to the feet of the *guru* and partake of the waters of life." "Guru" means a Hindu priest. The preacher showed them the one high priest for all men, Jesus Christ.

The Second Church in the city of Ahmednagar has in its constitution a declaration that it will not receive help from the Mission Board. It is a live, stirring church.

The First Church in the city of Ahmednagar is a good illustration of the activity and independence of a native church. This church had, at the close of last year, enrolled in full membership, 529 persons. Besides these there were 260 catechumens in preparation for membership, and 294 baptized children, making a total of 1,083 persons upon the church register. The Sunday-school has an enrolment of 1,139 members. Several more adults and children are in the regular congregation. For lack of room, the Sunday-school meets in the forenoon in three

sections, and in the afternoon there are four separate preaching services to accommodate the congregation, two separate services for adults, one for children and one for mothers with babes. The Christian Endeavor Society of the church, with a membership of about five hundred, carries on five or six Sunday-schools in different parts of the city, and arranges for street preaching in several districts in the afternoon. The church has a branch with an entirely separate set of services in a suburb two miles away. During the week there are neighborhood prayer-meetings, women's meetings, mothers' meetings, etc. This church supports its own pastor, sexton and officers, and is making monthly contributions for the erection of a new church building.

In all places fees are paid by the parents for the tuition of the children in the schools, as far as they are able to pay. Many schools, however, in the villages, must be supported by foreign funds until the people are better able to appreciate the value of an education for their children. They are now so poor that it is no little financial contribution to the cause for them to permit their children to leave off productive labor in order to attend school.

## CASTE AND CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY.

It may be said, without fear of exaggeration, that every act of a Hindu's life is religious. Caste lies at the base of his religion, and this prescribes the manner and method of his life throughout the day. Sin is to him violation of the regulations and cus-

toms fixed by his caste. Acts which are not wrong in themselves, but which would unfavorably affect his caste standing are avoided as a crime. Many a Hindu would choose death rather than to break his caste and be driven from his home, shunned and despised by his nearest and dearest friends, and able to associate thereafter only with those whom he has always regarded as polluting by their very presence. When a Hindu accepts Christianity and is baptized he breaks his caste, and so severs all of his old relations. He is thereafter permitted to associate only with those who have also broken caste by baptism, and who now form the Christian communities in India and Ceylon. The number of Christians in these countries is rapidly increasing, so that now there are no less than two and one-half millions of Christians, according to the census of the government recently taken, and about one million of these are Protestants. Among these Protestants are now numbered many who were born in the highest castes, and they together constitute the best educated community in the country. The Christian associations in Colombo, Madras, Poona, Bombay and other cities exert a wide and ever-increasing influence for righteousness, purity, industry and intelligence.

The Protestant Christian community of India has greatly increased during the last ten years, while the population has made but slight increase. The influence of caste seems to be diminishing. Many educated Hindu societies are organized for the avowed purpose of abolishing a custom which they call "the curse of India." All this makes it

easier for the Hindu to break from his old life and identify himself with the Christians, and yet the Christian is still considered dead by his former friends and acquaintances. The Christian community in India represents much self-sacrifice, many having given up everything they once possessed when they made public profession of their belief in Jesus Christ.

### HINDU IDEA OF PURITY.

An educated Hindu said to a member of the deputation, — “ We have an entirely different standard of purity and cleanliness from that of the Christian nations. Nothing is unclean to us that is ceremonially clean, no matter how filthy it may be from a scientific standpoint.” Daily one may see hundreds of Hindus, many of them educated and wealthy, bathing in the Ganges at Benares, just below where a large drain from the city empties into the river, and where all kinds of filth are floating. As they bathe they drink, and pots of the water are taken home to be there consumed. However filthy, to the Hindu the waters of the Ganges are always pure.

The English government has put into the city of Benares a water system in which the water is taken from the river above the city and thoroughly filtered. A missionary in the city saw an old Brahmin draw a brass bowl of the clear water from one of the public taps and then, stooping down, pick up a handful of dust and dirt from the center of the filthy street and drop it into the clear water. He stirred it up with his hand and



drank the mixture. When asked by the missionary why he did it, he said, "Since the English have interfered with our beautiful Ganges water, which we always drank, it looks very clear, but it does not seem to have any body to it."

Christianity teaches purity and cleanliness in the outward as well as in the inward life.

## LARGE RETURNS FOR THE INVESTMENT.

There is probably no mission field under the care of the American Board in which larger results are obtained from the small sums of money given. India and Ceylon are countries of cheap living and low wages for the people. It is not so cheap for the foreigner, however, who must needs have many foreign things to enable him to do his work well. He must also have more protection from the severity of that tropical climate than the native who was born there ; otherwise his health will give way.

These countries differ from most mission fields in that the government is sympathetic. In a large number of cases grants of land are made by the government free from expense, upon which the mission erects buildings for its work. These grants are usually made in the form of a perpetual lease, to be used by the mission without rent so long as it shall be necessary for the conduct of its work. A high official of the Indian government told the deputation that our missionaries could have anything they asked for within the power of the government to grant. He added, "Your

missionaries are so reasonable in their requests and so sensible in the conduct of their work that we have the utmost confidence in them." Property that the government cannot grant outright is frequently sold to the mission at but a fraction of its market value. Just as the deputation was leaving India, the government made a grant of about four acres of valuable land just outside of the walls of Ahmednagar, as a site upon which the mission is to erect a hospital. This land could not have been purchased at any price, for it is within the military limits, where no buildings are permitted to be erected. By the kindness of the Indian government the hospital will stand alone in the large open area.

Not infrequently the government makes liberal appropriations of money to help put up hospitals and school buildings. The new girls' school building, Capron Hall, now in process of construction in Madura, is to receive four thousand dollars in aid from the government. After schools have been well established and the teaching conducted in accordance with the government standard, annual grants are made to the schools in accordance with the number of pupils and the grades passed. All this is in direct aid of our missionaries' work. The government of India recognizes that the success of the work of our missionaries will be of advantage to India, and they are willing to help in lines that cannot be called directly proselyting. They will help support a Christian teacher, but never a pastor or preacher. The teacher is permitted to teach the Bible in his school and preach the gospel as much as he pleases.

Salaries are low. The pastor of the large

and flourishing church at Ahmednagar, already mentioned, has a salary of 25 rupees, or \$8.33 a month, — \$100 a year. Other pastors in that same mission, in more rural districts, get 15 rupees, or \$5 a month. A teacher often gets no more than \$2 or \$3 a month. Many of the devoted Christian workers in these countries are working and living on this smaller salary.

The deputation helped in the dedication of a church which cost about twenty dollars to build. Of course the people themselves did work which was not included. This "prayer house" had mud walls and floor, and a thatched roof, and that is about all it had except space within the walls for about one hundred people to sit upon the ground, packed like sardines in a box. Another church visited was built of stone and lime, had a tile roof and a hard floor, with plenty of light and air, and would seat one hundred and seventy-five people. This cost one hundred dollars, and will last a half century. A pastor's house in some places costs twenty-five or thirty dollars, and a schoolhouse as much as a church. The same building frequently answers for both school and church. In larger towns and cities, buildings cost more and need to be larger. There are no wooden buildings; all are of mud, stone or brick.

It is easy to see that with the aid given from outside sources, and with the low cost of salaries and buildings, a large work can be carried on with a small amount of money.

The results of the last Indian census have not yet been published in full, but from what

has been made public, it is evident that there has been a marked growth in the number of Indian Christians during the past decade. Government returns now show not less than one million Protestant Christians in that country, which is an average increase for the country of not far from seventy per cent in the ten years. In some parts the growth in numbers has been more than one hundred per cent.

Twenty-five years ago the American Board had 70 missionaries in these three missions, now it has but 16 more; then but 115 out-stations were occupied, while now work is carried on in 513 places; there were then 66 churches with 3,215 members, while there are now 105 churches with a membership of 11,842. The present membership of the churches connected with these missions is greater than the membership of all of the churches in all of the missions of our Board (including India) twenty-five years ago. Then there were 424 trained native pastors, preachers, teachers and Bible readers, while there are now 1,539. The reports then took no notice of amounts given by the natives for the support of their own work, while last year their gifts amounted to over nineteen thousand dollars.

In the twenty-five years, the number of trained native Christian workers, many of whom are now supported entirely by the people, has increased nearly fourfold, and the number of church members in about the same proportion, and the ratio of increase is becoming greater with each decade.

## FOR REFERENCE.

Number of missions . . . . . 20

In Papal Lands, 3; in Pacific Islands, 2; in Japan, 1; in China, 4; in India and Ceylon, 3; in Africa, 3; in Turkey, 4.

Total number of missionaries . . . . . 544

Ordained, 167; wives, 168; single women, 191; physicians, 42; unordained, 4.

Total number of native helpers . . . . . 3,483

Total number of churches . . . . . 505

Total number of members . . . . . 50,892

Total number of schools . . . . . 1,280

Theological Seminaries, Colleges, Boarding and High Schools, village and district schools, and the kindergarten.

Total number of pupils . . . . . 62,188

Number of hospitals and dispensaries . . . . . 50

Number of patients treated . . . . . 313,000

Accessions on confession of faith, or nine per cent increase . . . . . 4,551

Contributions from native sources . . . \$147,879

*Note.* — For the adequate support of the work we need at least \$60,000 more annually from living donors.

*Note.* — For steadiness of income for the work of the Board, the Twentieth Century Fund is proposed and commended, namely, \$250,000.

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